Siam, India, and Ceylon. In Ceylon, a ruler who treated a Chinese envoy with contumely was taken prisoner and transported to China, and at least part of the island is said to have paid tribute to the Ming for the next half-century. In several others of the lands visited the local princes were induced, either peaceably or by force, to recognize Chinese overlordship. The leading commander in these southern exploits was a eunuch, Cheng-Ho, who had first distinguished himself in the suppression of a rebellion in Yunnan. Under his captaincy seven expeditions sailed to the southern seas, the last of them after Yung Lo's death. He visiteu Annam, Cambodia, Malacca, Siam, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Cochin, Ceylon, Bengal, Arabia, the Somali Coast (in Eastern Africa), and Ormuz (on the Persian Gulf). Tribute was received from Java, Yung Lo was sent presents from one or more rulers in South India and conferred the title of king upon one, and even from the distant Somali Coast four missions were dispatched to China before his death. During no other native dynasty has Chinese authority ever been so far extended overseas.

In domestic administration, the Yung Lo period saw notable achievements. The Emperor moved the seat of imperial government to the North, to what he called Peking, or the Northern Capital, in contrast to his father's choice, Nanking, or the Southern Capital. The reason for the change may have been that Peking, so much nearer the northern marches, held a better location for the defense of the Empire against its traditional enemies. It may also have been because the North had been the center of Yung Lo's power and was more friendly than the South. Peking, occupying part of the site of the Cambaluc

of the Mongols, was largely rebuilt. The grandeui of the conception of the architects can be discerned in the present walls and imperial palaces and temples, for these, repaired and altered from time to time, in their main features date from the Yung Lo period. It is doubtful whether even to-day any capital in the world is more impressive. Certainly in Yung Lo's time Peking was unrivalled for the formal and stately expression in buildings of its position as the seat of administration of a vast empire. If one is tempted by the ornate painting and inferior sculpture of the dynasty to dismiss the aesthetic achievements of the Ming as degenerate, it is well to remember that the genius which could plan and carry